AGENDA ITEM: Telecommunications Infrastructure

GENERAL OVERALL PROGRAM UPDATES:

CURRENT STATUS:

Telecommunication Infrastructure

Representatives from the regional library networks of the Library of California (LoC) met with California State Library (CSL) staff in Sacramento on November 15 to share experiences and to address telecommunications challenges for the regions in 2002.

Among the topics discussed was the regional library networks' concern about LoC funding for 2002.

Mark Parker, Library Development Services bureau chief CSL, acknowledged the problem and stressed importance of carefully analyzing the best program options to support the considerable investment that the LoC has already made in telecommunications infrastructure.

Another important topic was the regional library networks' challenges in implementing programs that enable California residents in any part of the state to easily access library resources. Besides the complexity of computer software, provision of service depends on interlibrary loan policies, document delivery systems, and a basic commitment to open access to library collections. Staff gave an update on the National Profile for Z39.50, the telecommunications protocol for linking library catalogs.

Regional library network representatives in the meeting included Nancy Brower, Cascade Pacific; Gail McPartland and Cara Wong, Golden Gateway; Darla Gunning, Gerry Maginnity, and Lois Shumaker, Sierra Valley; Cary Gordon, consultant, Arroyo Seco; Judith Segel and Janice Webb, Gold Coast. Also participating was Cathie Helmick, Network Services Consultant, Library Development Services.

 The next meeting will be held via videoconference on April 30, 2002.

Z39.50 Connectivity

A Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) grant to support the use of the Z39.50 protocol by libraries and to address security concerns about its use in a secure network environment is underway. The CALZIG (Californa Z39.50 Interest Group) project will also experiment with building a statewide gateway to Z39.50 accessible catalogs. Additional information about connection status and conformance with the

existing Bath Profile and emerging U.S. National Profile will be provided. These profiles specify additional procedures for configuration of the methods of searching the catalogs and indexes needed for standard search statements.

Staff concluded work with the CLSA program staff on the CLSA Z39.50 subsidy and Z39.50 server software grant programs. Information about each participant, including connection and configuration data has been incorporated into the CALZIG project and will be one of the sources for the statewide list of accessible Z39.50 catalogs.

A small number of libraries receiving the CLSA Z39.50 subsidy allow only a web based gateway server to utilize the Z39.50 service. Such arrangements were allowed a subsidy this year although staff do not believe it provides the type of unrestricted access necessary for statewide resource sharing. Staff will discuss with the Board whether or not this is an issue that will need to be addressed in any future grant program.

E-Rate Program

The Schools and Libraries Division (SLD) of the Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC) provides affordable access to telecommunications services for all eligible schools and libraries in the United States. The USAC is a not-for-profit corporation appointed by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to ensure that the benefits of telecommunications services reach students and communities across the country. Funded at up to $2.25 billion annually, the program provides discounts on telecommunications services, Internet access and internal connections.

The California State Library is responsible for the approval of technology plans from each applicant public library. The application filing window for Funding Year 5 (7/1/02 – 6/30/03) closed on January 17, 2002. Technology plans must be on file and approved by the time the library files the Form 486, Receipt of Service Confirmation, with the SLD.

On January 25, 2002, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) released a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) and Order, FCC 02-8. This NPRM initiates a review of certain rules governing the universal service support mechanism for schools and libraries. The goals of the NPRM are as follows:

- To consider changes that would fine-tune FCC rules to improve program operation;
- To ensure that the benefits of this universal service support mechanism for schools and libraries are distributed in a manner that is fair and equitable; and
- To improve FCC oversight over this program to insure that the goals of section 254 are met without waste, fraud, or abuse.

Comments are due 45 days after the NPRM is published in the Federal Register. Comments may be filed on paper or electronically. Instructions for filing comments

may be found in paragraphs 108 – 113 of the NPRM.

The complete document is available from the Schools and Libraries Division (SLD) website at: http://www.sl.universalservice.org/

Staff have informed Public Library Directors about the California E-Rate/California Teleconnect fund email list sponsored by the California Department of Education. (http://www.cde.ca.gov/erate/). The list is open to both libraries and schools and provides up to date information on application information, deadlines and changes in program policy. Staff continue to collaborate with the California Department of Education as well as telecom vendors to coordinate information and training about the E-Rate and California Teleconnect Fund.

Digital California Project

The Digital California Project (DCP) is a multi-million dollar effort designed to build the necessary network infrastructure needed to prepare California's schools to take advantage of tomorrow's advances in network technology. The DCP is developing an advanced-services network to serve the entire K-20 education and research community. Staff continue conversations with representatives from the project to discern the appropriate role for the Library of California in working with libraries as content providers and participants in the project. Additional information is available from the DCP website: http://www.cenic.org/DCP.html.

<u>RELATED ISSUES TO COME BEFORE THE BOARD IN THE FUTURE</u>:

1. Development of Regional Telecommunications programs.

2. Restriction on Z39.50 access and eligibility for Z39.50 funding.

Relevant Committee: Support Services
Staff Liaison: Ira Bray

Doc. 2541